



FLATHEAD

CONSERVATION DISTRICT

133 Interstate Lane, Kalispell, MT 59901 | www.flatheadcd.org | 406-752-4220

CALL TO ORDER & ATTENDANCE

Vice Chair Lori Curtis called the November 25, 2019, Business meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. in the conference room.

Board members present: Lori Curtis, Vice-Chair; Dean Sirucek, Secretary/Treasurer, Supervisor; Verdell Jackson, Supervisor; Ronald Buentemeier, Supervisor; Lech Naumovich, Supervisor, being a quorum of the Board.

Board members absent: Pete Woll, Chairman; John Ellis, Supervisor. Absences are excused.

Also, in attendance were Donna Pridmore, Associate Supervisor; Hailey Graf and Samantha Tappenbeck, FCD staff; Sean Johnson, NRCS.

MINUTES

The Board of Supervisors will review the meeting minutes during the next meeting, scheduled for December 9, 2019.

CORRESPONDENCE

Email: Newsletters/Publications

1. National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) publications
Conservation Clips, NACD eResource
<https://www.nacdnet.org/>
2. Montana Watershed Coordination Council *Watershed News*
<http://mtwatersheds.org/app/>
3. Montana NRCS News
<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/mt/newsroom/events/>
4. FWP New Release
Montana's watercraft inspection stations set another record for boats inspected in 2019. More than 112,00 watercraft have been inspected so far this year, surpassing last year's number by 3,000 inspections. Inspectors have intercepted 16 boats with invasive mussels coming into the state. AIS monitoring crews have surveyed 300 unique waterbodies for aquatic invasive plants and animals. No mussel veligers or adult mussels were detected in the waters of Montana this year. That news has

prompted FWP to initiate the process to lift the quarantine restrictions on Canyon Ferry Reservoir. If the restrictions are lifted, the Canyon Ferry certified boater program would end, and Canyon Ferry inspectors would shift to a mobile roving inspection crew. The certified boater program on Tiber Reservoir will remain in place for the next two years. In 2016, invasive mussel larvae were detected in multiple water samples from Tiber Reservoir, which requires a five-year quarantine period. Canyon Ferry reservoir had one suspect sample that dictated a three-year quarantine period of mussel-free water samples. An amendment to an administrative rule is required to change to the quarantine restrictions on Canyon Ferry Reservoir. A decision is expected by spring 2020.

5. Natural Resource & Conservation Service (NRCS) *Success Stories*
A newly renovated pollinator garden was just one project the partnership between the Madison Conservation District, Madison Farm to Fork, and Ennis School District tackled this summer. They also completed the campus greenhouse with the help of NRCS grant funds. A lot of volunteers in Broadus, Mont., came together to build their first community garden. The generous support of local businesses and community members, with NRCS grant funds, made the project possible. People in both Ennis and Broadus worked together to improve access to healthy, local produce in different ways with amazing results! In both cases, school groups are learning about growing food, agriculture, nutrition, and more. We may not think of our rural Montana communities as food deserts, but the distance to grocery stores can make it difficult to reliably have access to healthy food - especially fresh fruits and vegetables. Learn more from the USDA's [Food Access Research Atlas](#)

Email: Workshops, Meetings

1. Whitefish Planning Board Meeting, November 21, 6:00 P.M., Whitefish City Council Chambers. <http://www.cityofwhitefish.org/>
2. The Montana Invasive Species Bulletin hosted by Montana Department of Natural Resources & Conservation (MACD)
Feral Swine Summit Live Stream Link
To view the recorded version of the Feral Swine Summit, click on the following links:
01 Morning Keynote Session: https://youtu.be/DPb_hAtTVw0 [youtu.be]
02 Morning Panel Session: <https://youtu.be/Bw4XR04W6Eq> [youtu.be]
03 Afternoon Session: <https://youtu.be/fmXbf7B9gu0> [youtu.be]
Visit misc.mt.gov for more information.

Email: Other

1. Quivira Coalition's 2020 Ranching Apprenticeships applications are now open. They are 8-month, paid apprenticeships with free housing and food supplement. The program has expanded greatly in Montana this year (from three sites to 13) and we need some help getting the word out to potential apprentices. Ranch site descriptions and applications can be found at <https://quiviracoalition.org/apprenticeships/> [quiviracoalition.org] Contact Alexis Bonogofsky, Quivira Coalition, New Agrarian Program, Billings, Montana 406-698-4720

- 2, The Montana Rangeland Resources Committee and the Rangeland Resources Program at DNRC announce a unique opportunity for students and ranch owners. Selected students will have the opportunity to spend two weeks at six host ranch operations. This 12-week summer internship is designed to offer beginning agriculturalists, natural resource and range specialists, biologists, soils majors or any student looking into natural resources, the real-world and hands-on experience implementing the educational tools already known to a ranching operation. Ranch owners and managers will serve as mentors to program participants. The program will specifically be targeted at those hoping for employment with land management agencies and other conservation organizations, with an expectation that those seeking opportunities to manage, or own ranches would see benefits of participating in the program as well. This internship program will directly benefit participants, agencies, agriculture and the broader community that relies on well-managed lands. Both students and ranch hosts are encouraged to apply for this program. For more information contact: Stacey Barta sbarta@mt.gov for more information, visit the link: <http://dnrc.mt.gov/divisions/cardd/rangeland-resource-program> Aspects of this internship were also featured in an article by Prairie Populist: <http://prairiepopulist.org/dnrc-rangeland-education-program> **Application Deadline** is February 1st.

FINANCIAL

The following bills were reviewed:

1. Byte Savvy \$90.00
2. CenturyLink \$311.90
3. MontanaSky Networks \$10.00
4. VISA \$541.89

Dean Sirucek motioned “to approve the bills as presented.” Verdell Jackson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No one was present to comment on items not listed on the agenda.

NEW BUSINESS

Advertising Contract: Hailey Graf explained that the District’s advertising contract with Flathead Beacon will expire in December and asked that the board renew the contract for 2020 with no changes from the previous contract.

Dean Sirucek motioned “to approve the Flathead Beacon advertising contract for 2020.” Verdell Jackson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Flathead CORE Website: Hailey Graf presented a letter from the Flathead CORE (Community of Resource Educators) requesting funding for their website hosting. The request included \$615 to go towards a three-year subscription for website hosting through GoDaddy as well as malware, the SSL certificate, and maintaining the domain name.

Hailey stated that Flathead CORE is an unaffiliated group of educators that work to increase opportunities and resources for local teachers and students. Most of the work is done through volunteers and donated time. Hailey added that the District has participated in the group for many years and that the District has previously provided funds for the website. The board and staff discussed Flathead CORE's purpose and goals and the contributions by other group partners. Ronald Buentemeier and Lech Naumovich expressed concern that the District may be contributing more than other partners and that the website may become a burden. Lori Curtis suggested that Flathead CORE add a note about the District's contribution to their website.

Dean Sirucek motioned "to approve CORE website hosting in the amount of \$615." Lech Naumovich seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Staffing: Hailey Graf submitted a letter to the board requesting their consideration of granting a service award to Ginger Kauffman for her contributions while the District experienced staff shortages.

Lech Naumovich motioned "to approve the letter request and the associated service award for Ginger Kauffman in the amount of \$1200." Dean Sirucek seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Verdell Jackson asked to verify that it is legal to give a service award and Lori Curtis confirmed that it is.

Staff Medical Insurance: Hailey Graf presented the 2020 medical coverage options for District staff. She explained that following a meeting with Payne West Insurance, Ginger Kauffman and Samantha Tappenbeck elected to remain on the current insurance. The monthly premiums for this option increased slightly in 2020 as well as the co-pay and co-insurance costs. Hailey selected a comparable plan that qualifies for a Health Savings Account and her monthly premium would go down slightly.

Dean Sirucek motioned "to approve the staff health insurance renewal." Lech Naumovich seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Cost-Share Program: Samantha Tappenbeck presented cost-share contract FCD 2019-05/Magone to the board. She explained that the project had been approved at a previous meeting, and the contract just needs signed. Lori Curtis, Vice-Chair signed the contract.

Cow Creek Grant #218013: The board reviewed the Cow Creek billing statement for billing period 10/24/2019-11/25/2019.

Ronald Buentemeier motioned "to approve the Cow Creek Billing statement in the amount of \$5140.00." Verdell Jackson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Supervisors Terms: Ginger Kauffman drafted a letter to the City of Whitefish requesting they consider reappointing John Ellis and Lech Naumovich to the Flathead Conservation District Board, as their terms are expiring in December. The board reviewed the letter and approved that it be sent out.

Lori Curtis, Vice-Chair signed the letter. The board discussed term process and appointments.

End of Month Reports: The September and October End of Month reports were reviewed with by the board.

Dean Sirucek motioned “to approve the September End of Month Report as reported.” Verdell Jackson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Dean Sirucek motioned “to approve the October End of Month Report as reported.” Verdell Jackson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Ronald Buentemeier asked for an update from the group that met with the bank regarding Districts funds. Lori Curtis provided an update and stated that the bank is working to put together three different proposals which will be presented to the board at a later meeting.

REPORTS

Flathead CD Staff: Hailey Graf and Samantha Tappenbeck reported:

District Office and Outreach

1. Advertisements: Flathead Beacon – Fall 310 ad with new logo & Seedling Program with new logo.
2. Hailey and Samantha selected Mikaela Richardson as the Big Sky Watershed Corps Member. Mikaela will assist with education programs and landowner outreach. She starts her term on January 6th and will work for the District for 10 ½ months.
3. Hailey met with Heidi Fleury and staff from Red Lion to discuss final convention details. Hailey and Pete Woll participated in the final MACD Convention planning meeting on November 5th. Board and Staff attended convention throughout the week of November 18th – 22nd.
4. Samantha and Hailey met with the City of Kalispell and Forestation on 11/13/19 to discuss partnership opportunities related to the Flathead Rain Garden Initiative.
5. Hailey attended the Flathead CORE meeting on 11/16/19. The group discussed upcoming education events and direction for the next year.

On-the-Ground Projects

Cow Creek – Construction of the project was completed successfully. Future efforts will include monitoring, water quality sampling, outreach, and some maintenance. Hailey and Samantha are working to finish the annual report that is due by December 15th.

Trumbull Creek – The District now has a contract with DNRC, including a Scope of Work. As soon as possible, Hailey will begin the process for requesting bids to hire an engineer for the project. The board may find it necessary to form a committee responsible for reviewing bids.

Krause Creek – Hailey met with landowners Don and Mary Garner to discuss the process and timeline for implementation of this project. This project was approved by the legislature; however, it ranked #32 so funding has not yet been appropriated for it.

Programs

Cost-Share Program – This program is currently closed to applications. Samantha and Hailey processed the contracts for the successful applicants and will continue to coordinate with landowners as projects are implemented.

Seedling Program – Samantha is now managing the Seedling Program and has discussed the program and management needs with landowners. Four landowners have placed orders so far with more expected in the coming months.

Education Grant Program – This program is currently open for applications. So far, the District has funded one project at Glacier Gateway School to purchase a tower garden. Hailey and Samantha are continuing to conduct outreach for the program and coordinate with educators as they complete projects.

Education and Outreach

Workshops – Hailey and Samantha attended a planning meeting for the upcoming Landowner Stewardship Seminar Series. This seminar series will take place over seven weeks and will include presentations by numerous partners on topics such as soil health, pasture management, forestry & fire preparedness, wells & septic systems, and noxious weed management. Samantha also conducted research on options for creating a digital newsletter that can be used to advertise workshop announcements.

Website/social media - Over the last 30 days, the website had 721 users and 1,584 pageviews. The Facebook page reached 235 users and had 88 post engagements.

Natural Resources & Conservation Service (NRCS): Sean Johnson reported:

➤ **Programs**

- Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)
 - Long Range Plan submitted for review
 - Developing a Targeted Implementation Plan (TIP) for Ashley Lake area
 - Strong interest shown so far with landowner interest covering 1,000+ acres so far
- Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)
 - Working through new CSP-GCI (Grassland Conservation Initiative) program applications
 - Taking all applications for review next week

➤ **Review Items**

- Attended MACD meeting in Kalispell
- Joint Chief's meeting with USFS with Flathead Forest
 - Joint Chief's is a partnership project between NRCS/USFS under which we both work together in a given area to address concerns on both North Fork lands along with private
 - Interest in the Tally, Swan, Eureka, and Libby districts
- Attended Appropriations Law training in Bozeman

➤ **Upcoming Items**

- Thanksgiving
- CSP-GCI application reviews Dec 4th in Missoula

➤ **Miscellaneous**

- I will be out of the office the week of Christmas as New Years

Montana Association of Conservation Districts (MACD): No report.

Lori Curtis commented that Hailey Graf and District staff made great contributions to convention and comported themselves well.

Flathead County Planning Board (FCPB): Dean Sirucek reported that the meeting included a zoning change request which went ahead with a positive recommendation to the Flathead County Commissioners. The Planning Board will take up the discussion of agricultural zoning again in coming months. Last time the discussion was raised, the agricultural community made it clear that they do not want the zones reduced to one.

Whitefish City Planning Board (WCPB): No report.

Upper Columbia Conservation Commission (UC3): Lori Curtis stated that she will be attending the Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Summit as a representative. The next UC3 meeting is January 29th.

Haskill Basin Watershed Council (HBWC): No report

Flathead Basin Commission (FBC): The next meeting is scheduled for December 18th.

Clark Fork & Kootenai River Basins Council (CFKRBC): Verdell Jackson reported the council will meet on December 19th in Missoula or will have a conference call.

MATTERS OF THE BOARD/STAFF

Watershed Support Program: Dean Sirucek provided information to the board about the Watershed Support Program and his thoughts on program development. He described a tentative plan that includes a meeting in mid-January with potential partners. The goals of the meeting would be to determine what external grants might be used in conjunction with the Watershed Support Program and to determine priorities for Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) projects. The board discussed priorities and possible challenges to the program.

The next 310-Stream Permit meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 9, 2019, 7:00 P.M. in the conference room of the USDA building at 133 Interstate Lane, Kalispell, MT.

Adjournment: Verdell Jackson motioned “to adjourn.” Lori Curtis seconded. Motion carried unanimously. As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:04 P.M.

Submitted By:

Hailey Graf
Resource Conservationist

Ginger Kauffman
Administrator

Minutes approved by FCD Board motion made on:

<u>12/9/2019</u>	<u>Pete Woll</u>	<u>Chair</u>
(Date)	(Signature)	(Title – Chair etc.)